United Nations A/68/710

General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 January 2014

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 11
Sport for peace and development: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

Solemn appeal made by the President of the General Assembly on 29 January 2014 in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce

The President of the General Assembly has the honour to make the following solemn appeal in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce:

"The ancient Greek tradition of the *ekecheira*, or 'Olympic Truce', born in the eighth century B.C., serves as a hallowed principle of the Olympic Games. In 1992, the International Olympic Committee renewed this tradition by calling upon all nations to observe the Truce.

"Through its resolution 48/11 of 25 October 1993, the General Assembly urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce from the seventh day before the opening to the seventh day following the closing of each Olympic Games. This appeal was renewed in the Millennium Declaration.

"In the 2005 World Summit Outcome, our leaders emphasized that 'sport can foster peace and development' and encouraged the General Assembly to foster a dialogue and agreed proposals for a plan of action on sport and development.

"On 3 November 2005, the General Assembly held a plenary debate on the agenda item entitled 'Sport for peace and development' and also adopted, with universal support, resolution 60/8, entitled 'Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal', deciding to consider this item every two years in advance of each Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

"To this end, on 6 November 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/9. In that resolution, the Assembly urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce individually and collectively, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, during the period from the seventh day before the start of the XXII Olympic Winter Games, on 7 February 2014, until the seventh day following the end of the XI Paralympic Winter Games, on 16 March 2014.

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"The Olympic movement aspires to contribute to a peaceful future for all humankind through the educational value of sport, in particular youth. The Games will bring together athletes from all parts of the world in the greatest of international sports events as a means to promote peace, mutual understanding and goodwill among nations and peoples — goals that are also part of the founding values of the United Nations.

"As an expression of these common objectives, the International Olympic Committee has decided to fly the United Nations flag at Olympic Park. The United Nations system and the International Olympic Committee have strengthened their mutual cooperation and support through joint endeavours in such fields as human development, poverty alleviation, humanitarian assistance, health promotion, HIV and AIDS prevention, child and youth education, gender equality, peacebuilding and sustainable development.

"I welcome the leadership of Olympic and Paralympic athletes in promoting peace and human understanding through sport and the Olympic ideal, and the commitment made by various States Members of the United Nations to developing national and international programmes that promote peace and conflict resolution and the Olympic and Paralympic values through sport and through culture, education and sustainable development.

"As President of the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, I solemnly appeal to all Member States to demonstrate their commitment to the Olympic Truce for the 2014 Sochi Olympic and Paralympic Games, and to undertake concrete actions at the local, national, regional and world levels to promote and strengthen a culture of peace and harmony based on the spirit of the Truce. Referring to the original tradition of the Olympic Truce practised in ancient times, as described in resolution 68/9, I also call upon all warring parties of current armed conflicts around the world to boldly agree to true mutual ceasefires for the duration of the Olympic Truce, thus providing an opportunity to settle disputes peacefully."